

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EA-07 ISO-00 VO-03 SS-15 CPR-01
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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5220
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6063

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, KS
SUBJECT FONMIN'S TRAVEL PLANS

REF: SEOUL 5864 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: ROKG FONMIN PLANNING TRAVEL TO U.S. AND JAPAN
AND MEETING WITH THAI PRIMIN IN SEOUL. AFRICAN TRIP
ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR THIRD WEEK IN JULY MAY BE
CANCELLED BECAUSE OF U.S.-ROK SECURITY CONSULTATIVE
MEETING (SCM) END SUMMARY

1. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH FONMIN AND VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF HIS
MOFA STAFF WE HAVE PIECED TOGETHER THE FOLLOWING FONMIN
TRAVEL ITINERARY. WITH EXCEPTION OF AFRICA SEGMENT, MOST
OF MINISTER'S TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS APPEAR TO BE FIRM.
FONMIN HAD ORIGINALLY PLANNED TRIP TO AFRICA (ZAIRE,
KENYA AND GABON), BEGINNING THIRD WEEK IN JULY FOLLOWING
SECURITY CONSULTATIVE MEETING (SCM) WITH U.S. SECRETARY
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OF DEFENSE BROWN IN SEOUL. POSTPONEMENT OF SECRETARY
BROWN'S VISIT UNTIL JULY 24 HAD LED FOREIGN MINISTRY TO
ATTEMPT TO RESCHEDULE AFRICA VISIT. FONMIN HAD INDICATED
TO AMBASSADOR JULY 18 THAT AFRICAN TRIP TO BE CANCELLED
BECAUSE OF SCM CONFLICT. MOFA AFRICA BUREAU STAFF,
HOWEVER, IS STILL WORKING ON ARRANGEMENTS TO VISIT THREE
AFRICAN NATIONS WITH DEPARTURE FROM SEOUL TENTATIVELY

SCHEDULED FOR JULY 29. ACCORDING TO MOFA OFFICIALS, FONMIN EXPECTED TO MAKE FINAL DECISION ON WHETHER VISIT TO THREE AFRICAN NATIONS WILL BE POSSIBLE MONDAY, JULY 25. MEANWHILE CONTACTS WITH GOVERNMENTS OF ZAIRE, GABON AND KENYA ARE CONTINUING IN ORDER TO ARRANGE TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR FONMIN VISIT.

2. FOLLOWING AFRICA SWING FONMIN WILL RETURN TO SEOUL AND ON OR ABOUT SEPTEMBER 6 WILL GO TO JAPAN IN COMPANY OF SEVERAL ECONOMIC MINISTERS FOR ROK-JAPAN MINISTERIAL MEETING IN TOKYO. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THESE MEETINGS ARE STILL BEING DISCUSSED BY JAPANESE WHO HAVE NOT YET SET FIRM DATE. FOLLOWING MINISTERIAL MEETING FONMIN WILL RETURN TO SEOUL TO RECEIVE VISITING THAI PRIME MINISTER THANIN WHO IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE SEPTEMBER 10 AND LEAVE FOR JAPAN SEPTEMBER 14. FONMIN IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO SPEAK TO CALIFORNIA COMMONWEALTH CLUB IN SAN FRANCISCO SEPTEMBER 16 FOLLOWING WHICH HE PLANS TO PROCEED TO NEW YORK IN TIME FOR 32ND UNGA OPENING SEPTEMBER 20. MINISTER TOLD AMBASSADOR JULY 18 THAT HE HOPES TO SPEND ONLY TWO WEEKS AT THE UNGA AND BARRING ANY UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING KOREAN QUESTION IN UNGA WILL THEN RETURN TO SEOUL, IN PART BECAUSE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSION WILL BEGIN SEPTEMBER 22 AND ISSUES MAY ARISE WHICH WILL REQUIRE HIS ATTENTION.

3. VISIT TO GABON IS PROBABLY PRIMARY REASON FOR FONMIN'S
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AFRICA TRIP. ROK WOULD LIKE TO BE REASSURED AT HIGH LEVEL THAT GABONESE POLICY REGARDING KOREAN QUESTION HAS NOT BEEN ALTERED BY PRESIDENT BONGO'S RECENT TRIP TO PYONGYANG. PRESIDENT BONGO'S FAILURE TO MEET WITH ROKG AMBASSADOR FOR OVER A MONTH FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM PYONGYANG, DESPITE HIS PROMISE TO FILL ROK'S IN ON PYONGYANG TRIP, HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT UNSETTLING FOR ROKG AND THEY WOULD OBVIOUSLY LIKE TO BE REASSURED OF BONGO'S CONTINUING SUPPORT. VISIT TO ZAIRE JUST PRIOR TO 32ND UNGA WOULD BE IN ROKG VIEW USEFUL MEANS OF FIRING UP WHAT HAS BEEN A VERY GRATIFYING POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH KOREA'S COMPETITION WITH NORTH KOREA AS WELL AS PROVIDING AN INDICATION OF CONTINUING ROK ECONOMIC INTEREST IN THE MINERAL-RICH CENTRAL AFRICAN NATION. FINAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISITS TO BOTH GABON AND ZAIRE ARE TEMPORARILY IN ABEYANCE SINCE HEADS OF STATE IN BOTH COUNTRIES ARE PRESENTLY ABROAD, ACCORDING TO MOFA. ROKG HAS INFORMAL ASSURANCE THAT BONGO WILL BE AVAILABLE TO RECEIVE FONMIN, BUT MOBUTU IS MAJOR QUESTION MARK. IF MOBUTU IS NOT AVAILABLE, ENTIRE TRIP WILL BE POSTPONED SINCE FONMIN WOULD WISHES TO SEE BOTH BONGO AND MOBUTU.

4. VISIT TO KENYA WILL PROVIDE ROK WITH OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUAINT KENYAN GOVERNMENT ON HIGHEST LEVEL (PROBABLY FONMIN WAIYAKI) WITH ROK POSITION IN UNGA AND SUCCESSFUL VISITS TO ALL THREE COUNTRIES COULD PRODUCE USEFUL HEDGE AGAINST POSSIBILITY NORTH KOREANS MIGHT TRY SURPRISE INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION ON KOREAN QUESTION AT 32ND UNGA. ALL THREE NATIONS WOULD BE IMPORTANT T ANY ROK EFFORT TO SECURE AFRICAN SUPPORT IN UNGA SHOULD KOREAN QUESTION BE INTRODUCED BY NORTH KOREAN ALLIES.

5. EMBASSY WILL REMAIN IN CONTACT WITH MOFA AND REPORT FURTHER ON MINISTER'S TRAVEL PLANS AS APPROPRIATE.
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